

Chronology of Reconstruction

1863

Lincoln's **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction**—states may be readmitted provided that 10% of the 1860 electorate takes an oath of loyalty to the Union and the state agrees to emancipation; Congress refused to recognize the plan.

1864

Congress passed the **Wade-Davis Bill**, more restrictive than Lincoln's plan; Lincoln vetoed the bill.

1865

March 3: **Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands** established. Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company chartered.

April: Lincoln assassinated and Johnson became President.

Summer: Johnson organized provisional governments and called on them to amend constitutions, abolish slavery, nullify secession, repudiate war debt and enfranchise blacks voluntarily.

December: Johnson announced that the Union has been "restored."
Congress refused to endorse Johnson's Reconstruction. Radical Republicans angered by Southern attempts to legislate second-class citizen status for blacks through Black Codes – the harshest codes effectively recreated slavery.
The **13th Amendment**, abolishing slavery, was proclaimed in effect after ratification by 27 states.

1866

March: **Civil Rights Act** – the Act gave the same rights to all persons born in the U.S. and affirmed freedmen's rights to make contracts, sue, give evidence, buy, lease, and convey personal and real property but excluded any state statutes on segregation and did not provide for full public accommodations, so separate but equal implicit. Johnson vetoed it on the grounds that it was illegal because passed in the absence of southern congressmen and was unconstitutional.

June: The **14th Amendment**, granting rights of citizenship, was passed by Congress because of fear of unconstitutionality of the Civil Rights Act. Ratification was eventually made a condition for readmission to Union by southern states.

June: The **Southern Homestead Act** granted 44 million acres of land (80 acres per family) for freedmen, mostly plots of poor soil quality.

Fall: Congressional Elections: Republicans won overwhelming victory with a 43-11 majority in Senate and 143-49 in the House. With veto override, Radicals control Reconstruction.

1867

Congressional Reconstruction. Radicals determined to crush the old southern ruling class. Southerners refused to cooperate. Reconstruction Acts did not go as far as radicals wanted to go. Johnson fought Reconstruction acts by appointing governors who refused to fully comply.

March 2. **1st Reconstruction Act**

Provisions: South divided into five military districts; existing state governments declared provisional only; governors required to call constitutional conventions with full manhood suffrage; blacks eligible to register to vote; states must ratify the new constitutions and 14th Amendment before representatives would be admitted to Congress.

March 23 through March 1868: **Supplementary Reconstruction Acts** close loopholes in original act and enforce provisions through authority of military governors.

1867-68

Military Reconstruction. During Military Reconstruction, federal troops occupied southern states and Johnson's provisional governments were replaced by military commanders. Small group of southern Unionists formed the core of the southern Republican Party and blacks joined en masse. The black/white coalition featured freedmen, Southern loyalists (called "Scalawags") and Northern Republicans in the South (called "Carpetbaggers").